

## ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

A system and method for establishing centralized, out-of-band access to remote network elements is provided. Status and other information can be securely retrieved from the remote elements. One or more servers observe and manage a plurality of remote elements using modem-to-modem communications between a modem bank and a remote modem. Requests are submitted through a central mediation point, thereby allowing central control of user profiles and a collection of security audit log information. One or more authentication mechanisms provide enforced security measures and trusted communication paths between a user and a remote element. Remote elements can be securely monitored and administered from a central location.